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C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 001351

SIPDIS
DEPT FOR SCA AND DRL
HELSINKI PASS ST PETERSBURG FOR INFO
MOSCOW PASS VLADIVOSTOK AND YEKATERINBURG FOR INFO
BELGRADE PASS PODGORICA FOR INFO

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (INFO ADDRESSEES AND ADDING CAPTION)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2018-11-24
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: AUTHORITIES REPORT ON HEALTH OF IMPRISONED OPPOSIT
IONIST
TATE

REF: a) TASHKENT 1235; TASHKENT 211; TASHKENT 1308; TASHKENT 927

CLASSIFIED BY: FITZMAURICE, RICHARD G; (B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: On November 18, the MFA delivered to the Embassy the results of a medical commission that was established by President Karimov on October 24 to examine the health of imprisoned oppositionist Sanjar Umarov (ref A). The report stated that Umarov suffered from "no significant pathology" - diagnosing him instead with "situational neurotic depression," gastritis, and hypertension - and concluded that there were no grounds to release Umarov from prison due to his medical condition. Examining the report, USAID Health Advisor in Tashkent noted that while it was impossible to independently confirm the results of the medical tests reportedly conducted on Umarov, there was nothing in the report itself which would lead one to conclude that the medical examiners were under-qualified or deliberately covered up any serious concerns about Umarov's health. Separately, the Embassy hosted a second informal roundtable on Umarov with his lawyer and foreign diplomats in Tashkent on November 6, while Umarov's wife reported seeing fresh evidence of physical abuse during her last meeting with her husband on October 25. Without independent access to Umarov, it is impossible for us to verify either the government's medical report on Umarov or information from his relatives. We will continue to monitor his condition as closely as possible and advocate for his release. End summary.

AUTHORITIES SHARE RESULTS OF MEDICAL COMMISSION

¶2. (C) On November 18, the MFA delivered a diplomatic note to the Embassy reporting the results of a medical commission that was established by President Karimov on October 24 to examine the health

of imprisoned oppositionist Sanjar Umarov (ref A). The report stated that Umarov suffered from "no significant pathology," diagnosing him instead with "situational neurotic depression," "rooted colitis," gastritis, and hypertension. The report added that Umarov "...keeps himself tidy and clean, adequately responds to doctors' questions, and is not delusional or hallucinating...Umarov answers questions to the point, although slowly and in monosyllables, has frank verbal and motional inhibition, weakness, and complains about fatigue, depression, and poor sleep." The report concluded that there were no grounds to release Umarov from prison due to serious illness. The desk later shared a copy of the report with Umarov's son Gulam in Washington.

13. (C) According to the medical report, Umarov was examined by leading specialists of the Health Ministry - including a neurologist, psychiatrist, endocrinologist, surgeon, and physician - who reportedly conducted on Umarov clinical and chemical blood analyses, an urinoscopy, x-rays, and an electrocardiography study (EKG).

BACKGROUND ON UMAROV MEDICAL COMMISSION

14. (C) After visiting her husband in prison on October 17, Umarov's wife Indira Umarova reported that his health condition was dire and her belief that he may die soon in prison. Following a meeting with Indira, the Ambassador sent a letter to President Karimov, requesting that Umarov be immediately released on humanitarian grounds. In response to the letter, the Ambassador was summoned to a

meeting with Foreign Minister Norov on October 24, who reported that, on President Karimov's initiative, a special "independent" commission was being created to conduct a medical examination on Umarov (ref A). Umarov's family has reported that his health has been in dire condition since February 2008 (ref B)

USAID HEALTH ADVISOR EXAMINES GOU MEDICAL REPORT

15. (C) USAID Health Advisor in Tashkent examined the government's medical report. Although it is impossible to independently confirm the results of the medical tests reportedly conducted on Umarov, he noted that such tests constituted a reasonable laboratory examination of a patient and that there was nothing in the report that would lead one to conclude that the medical examiners were under-qualified or deliberately covered up any serious concerns about his health.

16. (C) However, the Health Advisor observed that the medical commission neglected to perform a chest x-ray or toxicology screening. He noted that while the report attributed the slowness of Umarov's speech and movements to "exhaustion," it might also have been due to excessive sedation, which a toxicology screening could have revealed. He also noted that the report made no mention of whether Umarov described a history of mistreatment at prison or had any other physical complaints, which might have prompted further evaluation.

GOU SHARES MEDICAL RESULTS WITH UMAROV'S FAMILY

17. (C) Gulam reported by email that on November 19 his aunt Nodira Umarova received a five minute briefing on his father's health from a doctor at the Tavaksay prison (Comment: From Gulam's description, it appears that the doctor read to Nodira the same medical report that was delivered to the Embassy. End comment.) The doctor reportedly refused Nodira's offer to supply or pay for medicines for Umarov.

MEDICAL REPORT ARRIVES ON EVE OF GENERAL MCNABB'S VISIT

18. (C) Since the government informed the Embassy about the formation of the medical commission on October 24, the Ambassador and other Emboffs have requested regular updates from government officials, including Foreign Minister Norov. Perhaps not coincidentally, the MFA finally shared the results of the commission during a visit to Uzbekistan by Commanding General McNabb of U.S. TRANSCOM (ref C). The Embassy also delivered a diplomatic note to the MFA on November 18 requesting an update on the medical commission.

EMBASSY HOLDS SECOND INFORMAL ROUNDTABLE ON UMAROV

19. (C) On November 6, the Embassy hosted a second informal roundtable on Umarov with foreign diplomats in Tashkent, including representatives from the French, British, Czech, and Swiss Embassies and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Tashkent office. Also present was Rapid Reaction human rights group member Sukhrob Ismoilov, who was recently hired by the Umarov family to serve as his new lawyer. Ismoilov provided attendees with background information about the case and described reports by Umarov's family members of his worsening health. He also reported that he was denied access to Umarov in prison in his official capacity as his lawyer on October 27 and October 30, and was later told that Umarov had been temporarily transferred to the Sangorod prison hospital in Tashkent (Comment: We believe that Umarov was transferred to Sangorod in order to receive medical treatment and was possibly examined there by the medical commission. End comment.) The Ambassador also described the Embassy's recent interventions on behalf of Umarov and the government's formation of a medical commission to examine Umarov.

110. (C) All those present, including Ismoilov, agreed that the best way forward on Umarov was to continue to work through diplomatic channels rather than issuing public statements that might backfire by pushing the Uzbeks too far into a corner. They also agreed that the United States should continue to take the lead on intervening with the Uzbeks, though other diplomats said they would continue to follow the case closely. The Embassy previously hosted another informal roundtable for foreign diplomats with Umarov's son Arslan in August (ref D).

FAMILY REPORTS FRESH EVIDENCE OF ABUSE

111. (C) In an email to poloff on October 31, Gulam Umarov reported that when his mother Indira last saw his father at the Tavaksay prison on October 25, there were two "fresh bumps" on his head that were not visible the previous time she had seen him on October 17 (Comment: Indira had not reported this to poloff when she briefly called him about the meeting on October 25, reporting instead that nothing had changed in Umarov's condition between the two meetings, ref A. It is possible that Indira did not want to share this information with poloff over the phone, especially as she was concerned that authorities might not allow her to depart Uzbekistan the next day. End comment.)

COMMENT

112. (C) Without independent access to Uzbekistan's prisons, it is

impossible for us to verify either the government's medical report on Umarov or information from relatives that his health has deteriorated in prison. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which restarted prison visits this year, also has not met with Umarov. While Umarov remains behind bars and his health status is ultimately unknown, we believe that our forceful interventions on

his behalf this year have at least resulted in improved medical care for Umarov. We will remain in contact with Umarov's family and see if his health improves at all the next time his sister-in-law, who remains in Uzbekistan, visits him in prison, most likely in December. We also will continue to advocate for Umarov's amnesty and release from prison.
NORLAND

To view the entire SMART message, go to URL [http://repository.state.sgov.gov/layouts/OSSSearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:3595 36ef-5655-415f-b142-eb51b00bfd65](http://repository.state.sgov.gov/layouts/OSSSearchResults.aspx?k=messageid:3595%2036ef-5655-415f-b142-eb51b00bfd65)